



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**
Pittsburgh District

STUDENT EDUCATIONAL EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM GUIDE

- **Student Educational Experience Program (SCEP)**
- **Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP)**

**7 November 2000
CELRP-CPAC**

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INTRODUCTION

Student Educational Employment Program

The Student Educational Employment Program consists of two components: the Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP), and the Student Career Experience Program (SCEP). The STEP provides maximum flexibility to both students and managers because the nature of the work does not have to be related to the student's academic or career goals. The SCEP, however, provides work experience which is directly related to the student's academic program and career goals. Students in the SCEP may be noncompetitively converted to term, career or career-conditional appointments following completion of their academic and work experience requirements.

The use of the Student Educational Employment Program is encouraged for several reasons. There is always a need to recruit and develop talented employees as well as a desire to achieve a quality and diverse workforce. These student programs can help achieve these goals.

This guide will explain the differences between the two student programs and the requirements of each program. It will also provide information concerning benefits and inprocessing instructions. If you have further questions, please contact your servicing personnel specialist.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS
Student Temporary Employment Program
(STEP)

Eligibility Requirements:

- Enrollment or acceptance for enrollment as a degree seeking student (diploma, certificate, etc.) in an accredited high school, technical or vocational school, 2-year or 4-year college or university, graduate or professional program.
- Enrollment must be for at least a half-time course load. The definition of half-time is determined by the school in which the student is enrolled.
- Students must maintain at least a 2.0 grade point average, and must submit transcripts to the supervisor at the end of each semester/quarter to remain in the program.

Benefits:

- Annual Leave
- Sick Leave

Other:

It is possible for students hired under the STEP be converted to a SCEP position without being selected from a referral list.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Student Career Experience Program (SCEP)

Eligibility Requirements:

- Enrollment or acceptance for enrollment as a degree seeking student (diploma, certificate, etc.) in an accredited high school, technical or vocational school, 2-year or 4-year college or university, graduate or professional program.
- Enrollment must be for at least a half-time course load. The definition of half-time is determined by the school in which the student is enrolled.
- Students must work in a position that is directly related to the educational program for which enrolled.
- Students must maintain at least a 2.0 grade point average, and must submit transcripts to the supervisor at the end of each semester/quarter to remain in the program.

Benefits:

- Annual leave
- Sick leave
- Health insurance
- Life insurance
- Retirement coverage
- Thrift Savings Plan
- Possible conversion to term, career or career-conditional appointment

Other:

Upon graduation students may be converted to term, career or career-conditional appointments. This conversion must be made within 120 days after graduation. If there is not a position within the Pittsburgh District and the student indicates he/she is interested in positions in other Corps locations, contact your servicing personnel specialist. A message will be sent throughout the Corps asking if any other Districts are interested in placing the surplus student.

RECRUITMENT/SELECTION PROCEDURE **(STEP and SCEP)**

1. **Locate Candidates.** This can be done by preparing a vacancy announcement at the field location and distributing to local academic institutions, minority outreach organizations and all other recruitment sources. Vacancy announcements should be open for a minimum of two weeks. (Sample at appendix C) You may decide not to create a vacancy announcement since there will be an “open continuous” vacancy announcement at CPAC, directing applicants to submit their applications to the CPAC. You can ask your servicing CPAC personnel specialist to check the applicant supply file and refer to you any applicants with current applications on file. Whether you decide to open an additional vacancy announcement or use the applicant supply file at CPAC, *you must always check with your CPAC specialist to make sure there are no interested veterans with preference in the applicant supply file at CPAC.*

2. **Qualification Requirements.**

a. Students are qualified for General Schedule (GS) grades/positions on the basis of how far along they are in their formal educational program. It does not matter how much work experience they possess. The GS qualification requirements are outlined below:

GS-2 High school diploma or equivalent

GS-3 Completion of 1 academic year of post-high school study

GS-4 Completion of 2 academic years of post-high school study

GS-5 Completion of requirements for a bachelor’s degree

** An academic year of undergraduate education is defined as 30 semester hours, 45 quarter hours, or the equivalent in an accredited college, university, or technical school.*

*** This table outlines the highest level for which an applicant would qualify. This does not mandate that the selecting official hire a candidate at that highest grade level.*

b. Students to be employed under the Federal Wage Schedule (FWS) are qualified based on the level of work assigned in terms of the knowledge, skills, responsibilities, physical effort, and work conditions required at each grade level. They are evaluated on their ability to perform the duties of the position, but should be employed at a grade no higher than WG/WY-4. Applicants for FWS positions must be informed of the requirement to pass a physical and provide official physical examination form to selecting supervisor prior to entrance on duty date.

3. **Prepare referral list.** Check with your CPAC personnel specialist for any veterans with preference who may be on file in the CPAC. ***Veteran's preference does apply when hiring students.*** Also refer any questions regarding veteran's preference eligibility to the CPAC. Referral lists can be prepared on DA Form 2600 or on plain bond paper in memorandum format.

4. **Make selection.** It is not necessary to do a selection matrix for student selections. Simply annotate on your referral list which candidate(s) you are selecting.

5. **Approval.** Referral packages must be submitted to CPAC and should include:

- a. Application of selected candidate
- b. Applications of non-selected candidates
- c. Applications that were not complete
- d. Job Description
- e. Vacancy Announcement
- f. List of all contacted recruitment sources

The referral package will be reviewed by CPAC and routed through EEO for review.

NO candidate should be notified of tentative selection prior to receiving notification of approval from CPAC.

6. **Make job offer/Submit SF52.** Once you have been notified that the selection has been approved, make the job offer and prepare the PERSACTION (SF52) with the selected student's name and social security number on page 1. The PERSACTION must also include the position title, series, grade and organizational location. Also, annotate the job description number in the "Remarks" section of the PERSACTION. These actions should be routed through your approval chain and Resource Management, Manpower. ***These actions should be received in CPAC no later than two weeks prior to the effective date.*** Non-selected candidates should be notified within five days after selection approval in writing or telephonically and documentation must be submitted to CPAC to be maintained in the selection file.

7. **Inprocessing Paperwork.** Inprocessing paperwork must be submitted to the CPAC ***prior to the first day of the student's employment.*** (See checklist at Appendix A). A pre-appointment physical must be obtained before any wage grade students may begin working. Some notes to remember:

- SF-61, Appointment Affidavit should not be notarized. The only signatures required are the appointee and the "officer" or individual conducting the inprocessing.
- Memorandum of Understanding – give the student the memorandum and only return the page with the student's signature.

- Instructions for completing Form I-9 are on the back (page 2) of the form. You **MUST** see one of the identification items in list A or a combination of one item from List B and one from List C. This form must be signed by the individual conducting the inprocessing.
- SF-1199A, Direct Deposit Sign-up: Direct Deposit is a requirement for new employees. The student has two pay periods to submit this form to Resource Management (RM-F). If the form is not sent to RM within this time frame, their pay may be suspended.
- OF306, Declaration for Federal Employment: Please assure that appointed students sign **BOTH** lines 16a and 16b.
- SCEP employees are eligible for health and life insurance and Thrift Savings Plan. Please provide these employees information on the Army Benefits Center (ABC) and the different benefits to which they are entitled. **NOTE:** If SCEP students do not waive life insurance they will automatically be enrolled in Basic life insurance coverage. To waive life insurance during initial enrollment eligibility period please have the student complete SF2817 and submit with inprocessing package. All other benefits enrollments must be completed through the Army Benefits Center (ABC).

GENERAL INFORMATION

(STEP and SCEP)

Grades:

- Supervisors/Managers are responsible for the receipt, verification, and monitoring of academic requirements. Transcripts should be obtained from each student at the end of each semester, quarter, or equivalent. Transcripts for STEP and SCEP employees should be maintained by the supervisor/manager. *A copy of the transcripts for SCEP employees should be forwarded to the CPAC at the end of every grading period.*
- If a student's cumulative grade point average falls below 2.0 they may be placed on leave without pay for one grading period in order to improve that average. If, at the end of that grace period, the cumulative average is still below 2.0, they must be terminated. Students may be given consideration for reemployment after one grading period has been completed and/or until the cumulative average is at or above 2.0.

Step Increases:

- General Schedule (GS) STEP employees do not receive step increases.
- General Schedule (GS) SCEP employees do receive step increases.
- All Federal Wage System (FWS) employees receive step increases.

Work Schedules: Students may work full-time or part-time schedules. A PERSACTION (SF52) must be submitted to CPAC when:

- A student changes from full-time (40 hrs) to part-time (less than 40 hrs) or vice-versa.
- A part-time student employee increases or decreases the number of part-time hours to be worked.

The PERSACTION must be submitted to the CPAC two weeks prior to the effective date. For part-time schedules, the actual days and hours expected to be worked must be noted in the "Remarks" section.

Leave Without Pay: Many students only want to work during breaks (i.e. summer) from their academic program. When the student returns to school, they should be placed on leave without pay if they do not intend to work. A PERSACTION must be submitted to the CPAC for leave without pay. The expected date of return to a pay status must be noted in the "NTE" block on page 1 of the PERSACTION as well as the reason for the leave without pay.

Separations: Under the Student Employment Educational Program, separations from employment may occur for a number of reasons. See the guidelines below to determine the appropriate personnel action to take.

- **Termination** - Completion or Discontinuance of Education
 - STEP employees must be terminated at the end of the pay period following the date in which they complete their classroom schedules, final exams, or discontinue their education – **NOT** at the expiration date of their appointment.
 - SCEP employees who discontinue their education must be terminated in accordance with the same rules outlined for STEP employees. SCEP employees must also be terminated no later than 120 days following the completion of their academic requirements if the graduate has not been converted to a position in the competitive service.
- **Termination** – Failure to Meet Academic Requirements
 - STEP and SCEP employees must be terminated if they fail to meet the academic requirements of the program for which they are appointed. (i.e. fail to provide transcripts, cumulative grade average falls below 2.0) Termination actions should be effected at the end of the pay period after the supervisor/manager becomes aware of the poor grade point average or at the end of a grace period, if awarded.
 - SCEP employees who lose eligibility to be employed by the SCEP because they are no longer studying in the same or related field as the position they hold may be converted to the STEP program.
- **Termination** – Poor Performance or Conduct
 - Students employed in these excepted service programs generally have no procedural or appeal rights if separated for poor performance or conduct. There are however, two exceptions to this general rule. First, students who are preference eligible employees who have completed one year of current continuous service are entitled to procedural rights required by part 432 or part 752 of title 5, CFR. In addition, they have the right to appeal to the Merit Systems Protection Board. Second, nonpreference eligible students who have completed one year of current continuance employment are entitled to the procedural rights, but not the appeal rights of part 432. Contact your personnel specialist if this situation arises.

- **Termination – Other**

- STEP employees are subject to termination at any time without the use of adverse action or reduction-in-force procedures. A PERSACTION for termination should be submitted to CPAC with the appropriate reason noted in the “Remarks” section.

For all termination actions, a PERSACTION must be submitted to CPAC stating the reason for termination and forwarding address of the employee.

- **Resignation** - Students may choose to terminate their employment at any time. A PERSACTION must be submitted for a student’s resignation and include the reason for the resignation and forwarding address. If possible, the PERSACTION should be printed, allowing the student to sign page 2. If it is not convenient for the student to sign the PERSACTION, and the student resigned verbally, the supervisor/manager should prepare a memorandum for record documenting the conversation and forward it to CPAC.

SCEP Conversion to Career/Career-Conditional: Students enrolled in this program who complete their degree or certificate program may be converted to a career or career-conditional appointment upon completion of their educational program. To be eligible for conversion students must have worked under the Student Employment Experience Program for a minimum of 640 hours. These hours can be attained in a combination of the STEP and SCEP programs. SCEP students may continue on their appointment for 120 days beyond the date of completing their work and academic requirements. Within this 120 day period they may be converted to a career or career-conditional appointment with this agency or with any other federal agency. If there is not a permanent position for the student to be converted to and the student is willing to be considered for positions outside of the Pittsburgh District, please notify the organization’s servicing personnel specialist who will send out an interest inquiry to other Corps Districts.

INPROCESSING FORMS CHECKLIST
Student Educational Employment Programs
(STEP and SCEP)

- ____1. SF-61, Appointment Affidavit (must be signed by person conducting in-processing).
- ____2. Memorandum of Understanding/Certification
- ____3. CEORP FORM 664-#, Pre-appointment Certification Statement for Selective Service (Males born after 31 Dec 59).
- ____4. FORM I-9, Employment Eligibility Verification
- ____5. SF-256, Self-Identification of Handicap (optional)
- ____6. SF-181, Race and National Origin Identification (optional)
- ____7. SF-78, Certificate of Medical Examination (WG only)
- ____8. ENG Form 3898, Request for Mailing, (Leave and Earnings Statements, W-2)
- ____9. TFS 7311, City Tax Form (City of Pittsburgh Residents Only)
- ____10. Form W-4, Federal Tax Withholding
- ____11. CEORP 2052, State Tax Withholding Authorization Form (or other appropriate state tax form i.e., Ohio, WV)
- ____12. SF-1199A, Direct Deposit Sign-Up
- ____13. OPM 1635, Welfare to Work Program
- ____14. OF 306, (must have lines 16a and 16b signed)
- ____15. SF 144, Statement of Prior Federal Service (required even if there is no prior federal service)

NOTE: SCEP employees are eligible for health benefits, life insurance, retirement contributions, and Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) *. Notify employees of TSP eligibility, and provide TSP Summary Booklet. Provide them information on Life and Health insurance.

***TSP eligibility date determination:**

If Hired: Jan 1 thru Jun 30, eligibility begins during next Nov 15 - Jan 31 open season. If Hired: Jul 1 thru Dec 31, eligibility begins during next May 15 - Jul 31 open season.

(Appendix A)

MEMORANDUM FOR STUDENT EDUCATIONAL EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM (SEEP)
EMPLOYEE

SUBJECT: Eligibility Requirements and Conditions of Employment

1. ACADEMIC STATUS: Your appointment under the SEEP is contingent upon your enrollment in an academic institution on a full-time or half-time basis. Full-time or half-time enrollment is defined by the academic institution. A student is defined as an individual who is enrolled or accepted for enrollment as a degree or certificate seeking student and is taking at least a half-time academic vocational or technical course load in high school, or an accredited technical or vocational school, 2 or 4 year college or university or graduate school. It is expected that you will at all times either be enrolled in classes, working at the agency or both. However, the supervisor or Civilian Personnel Advisory Center coordinator will use discretion in either approving or denying a break in program. A break in program is defined as a period of time when a program participant is working but is unable to go to school, or neither attending classes nor working at the agency.
2. ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS: Students must maintain good academic standing throughout their course of study. You will provide to your supervisor a copy of your official grade report indicating your cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least a 2.0 overall scholastic average on a 4.0 scale or the equivalent; not later than 30 days after the end of each semester, quarter, or high school (HS) grading period. Failure to provide grade reports may jeopardize your continued employment with the Corps of Engineers. SCEP employees must work in a field which is directly related to the academic program they are currently studying.
3. ACADEMIC CRITERIA: If your overall GPA is below 2.0 at the end of a grading period, you may be given the opportunity at the supervisor's discretion, to be placed on LWOP during the next grading period so that you can attempt to improve your overall GPA to 2.0. If at the end of this grading period, your average is still below 2.0 you will be terminated from the program. Reemployment consideration will be given only after you have completed one academic semester, quarter or HS grading period and/or your overall average of 2.0 is met. Reemployment is not guaranteed but consideration will be made if there are vacancies.
4. APPOINTMENTS/REAPPOINTMENTS: Students are generally appointed to a position not to exceed 1 year unless the manager requests that the appointment be made for a shorter period of time. You may be extended in 1 year or less increments as long as you meet all of the requirements of the program.
5. CONVERSIONS: STEP appointments DO NOT confer eligibility to be non-competitively converted to term, career-conditional or career appointments. However, a STEP appointment may be converted to the Student Career Experience Program (SCEP). SCEP appointments MAY be converted to term, career-conditional or career appointments. This decision is based on the availability of positions within the organization and management's satisfaction with job performance.
6. The information provided in this memorandum is cited in the Code of Federal Regulations (5 CFR). It is not considered to be all inclusive.

CELRP-CPAC (690)

MEMORANDUM FOR CIVILIAN PERSONNEL ADVISORY CENTER

SUBJECT: Memorandum of Understanding Certification

I, _____ have received the original of this memorandum dated 16 October 2000 which outlines the Student Educational Employment Program eligibility requirements and conditions of employment. I have read and fully understand the requirements and my responsibilities for continued participation in the program.

Signature of Student

Date

(Appendix B (Cont'd))

The Department of the Army -- Job Opportunity Announcement

Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP)

Opening Date: October 2, 2000

Closing Date: October 16, 2000

Position Title (Pay Plan-Series): Park Ranger, GS-0025

Grade: 01, 02 or 03

Number of vacancies to be filled by this announcement ONE.

Location: US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
OPERATIONS AND READINESS DIVISION
BEAVER AREA OFFICE
SHENANGO RIVER LAKE
HERMITAGE, PA

Area of Consideration: Students who are pursuing any of the following educational programs: High School diploma, Associates Degree, Baccalaureate Degree, Graduate Degree, technical or vocational certificate program. *(For SCEP – add “The academic program must be directly related to the position you are applying for”).*

Academic Level Requirements: Students must maintain throughout their course of study a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.0 on a 4.0 scale or the equivalent.

Duties: Provides assistance to the public by answering general questions about the project, provides directions to the various sites and pointing out safety policies and programs. Reserves picnic shelters, registers campers, collects fees, assigns camp sites and explains rules and regulations governing recreational use of the reservoir by the general public. Following an established schedule, patrols developed recreational areas to observe and check compliance with regulatory requirements relating to activities within such areas. Reports any noted violations to a higher grade employee.

How to Apply: Please submit the following documentation to the address listed below.

1. OF-612 (Optional Application for Federal Employment) or Resume
2. OF-306 (Declaration for Federal Employment)
3. Statement of academic status on school letterhead signed by a school official indicating:
 - a. Name of Student
 - b. Social Security Number
 - c. Cumulative Number of Credit Hours
 - d. Current Cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA)
 - e. Anticipated Graduation Date
 - f. Classification of Student (i.e. part-time/full-time)

(Appendix C)

The Department of the Army – Job Opportunity Announcement (cont'd)

Applications Should be Addressed to:

(List Facility/Project Address)

THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER. All qualified applicants will receive appropriate consideration without regard to non-merit factors such as race, color, religion, sex, national origin, marital status except where specifically authorized by law, age, politics, disability, or sexual orientation which do not relate to successful performance of the duties of this position. Reasonable accommodation to individuals with disabilities will be provided upon request.

You may also contact the Shenango River Lake project office at (phone number) for more information or for needed forms.

This notice will be posted on bulletin boards at various locations and will be removed after the closing date.